

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 and 13-46, as amended, remain herein. Claims 32-43 are presently withdrawn from consideration. Claims 11 and 12 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1, 8, and 26 have been amended. New claims 45 and 46 have been added. Support for the amendments may be found throughout the specification (see, e.g., the figures, particularly, FIGS. 1 and 2; and original claims 11 and 12).

1. Claims 1-7 and 26-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Rouviere FR 2 797 579 in view of Grunert et al. U.S. Patent 3,030,959, Kolomeir U.S. Patent 3,708,235, and Yeh U.S. D491,604. Independent claims 1 and 26 have been amended to include the limitations of former claim 12 which was not subject to this rejection.

Applicants' claims 1 and 26 recite a puncture needle cartridge comprising a plurality of puncture needle stopping members whose front ends are folded towards the inner wall of the puncture needle cartridge, wherein the stopping members engage a dent in a surface of each puncture needle body member and are located in the puncture needle cartridge at intervals of about the length of the body member of the puncture needle.

None of Rouviere, Grunert, Kolomeir, and Yeh discloses applicants' claimed stopping members which are located in the puncture needle cartridge at intervals of about the length of the body member of the puncture needle. Applicants' specification explains that:

Further, the puncture needle cartridge described in the present invention further includes puncture needle stopping members for holding the respective puncture needles at predetermined positions in the puncture needle cartridge.

This facilitates the puncture operation which can be reliably carried out.

Further, in the puncture needle cartridge of the present invention, the puncture needle stopping members are provided in the puncture needle cartridge at a regular interval that is approximately equal to the length of the puncture needle.

Therefore, plural puncture needles can be loaded in the puncture needle cartridge such that the puncture needles are arranged at the same pitch in the longitudinal direction.

Applicants' specification, page 10, lines 6-18.

None of Rouviere, Grunert, Kolomeir, and Yeh teaches or suggests applicants' claimed invention. In addition, Rouviere, Grunert, Kolomeir, and Yeh disclose nothing that would have suggested applicants' claimed invention to one of ordinary skill in the art. There is no disclosure or teaching in any of Rouviere, Grunert, Kolomeir, Yeh, or otherwise in this record, that would have suggested the desirability of modifying or combining any portions thereof effectively to anticipate or suggest applicants' presently claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

2. Claims 8-17 and 21-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Grunert in view of Kolomeir and Yeh.

Applicants' claim 8 recites a puncture needle cartridge comprising a plurality of puncture needle stopping members whose front ends are folded towards the inner wall of the puncture needle cartridge, wherein the stopping members engage a dent in a surface of each puncture needle body member and are located in the puncture needle cartridge at intervals of about the length of the body member of the puncture needle.

As discussed above, none of Grunert, Kolomeir, and Yeh discloses applicants' claimed stopping members which are located in the puncture needle cartridge at intervals of about the

length of the body member of the puncture needle.

None of Grunert, Kolomeir, and Yeh teaches or suggests applicants' claimed invention. In addition, Grunert, Kolomeir, and Yeh disclose nothing that would have suggested applicants' claimed invention to one of ordinary skill in the art. There is no disclosure or teaching in any of Grunert, Kolomeir, Yeh, or otherwise in this record, that would have suggested the desirability of modifying or combining any portions thereof effectively to anticipate or suggest applicants' presently claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

3. Claims 19, 20, 22 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Grunert in view of Kolomeir, Yeh, and Rouviere. Claims 19, 20, 22 and 23 depend from claim 8.

As discussed above, none of Grunert, Kolomeir, Yeh, and Rouviere discloses applicants' claimed stopping members which are located in the puncture needle cartridge at intervals of about the length of the body member of the puncture needle.

None of Grunert, Kolomeir, Yeh, and Rouviere teaches or suggests applicants' claimed invention. In addition, Grunert, Kolomeir, Yeh, and Rouviere disclose nothing that would have suggested applicants' claimed invention to one of ordinary skill in the art. There is no disclosure or teaching in any of Grunert, Kolomeir, Yeh, Rouviere, or otherwise in this record, that would have suggested the desirability of modifying or combining any portions thereof effectively to anticipate or suggest applicants' presently claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

4. Claim 44 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Rouviere in view of Grunert, Kolomeir, Yeh, and Weiss U.S. Patent 5,957,601. Claims 44 depends from claim 1.

As discussed above, none of Rouviere, Grunert, Kolomeir, and Yeh discloses applicants' claimed stopping members which are located in the puncture needle cartridge at intervals of about the length of the body member of the puncture needle. Weiss does not teach or suggest what is missing from Rouviere, Grunert, Kolomeir, and Yeh.

None of Rouviere, Grunert, Kolomeir, Yeh, and Weiss teaches or suggests applicants' claimed invention. In addition, Rouviere, Grunert, Kolomeir, Yeh, and Weiss disclose nothing that would have suggested applicants' claimed invention to one of ordinary skill in the art. There is no disclosure or teaching in any of Rouviere, Grunert, Kolomeir, Yeh, Weiss, or otherwise in this record, that would have suggested the desirability of modifying or combining any portions thereof effectively to anticipate or suggest applicants' presently claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

For all the foregoing reasons, all claims are now proper in form and patentably distinguished over all grounds of rejection cited in the Office Action. The PTO is hereby authorized to charge or credit any necessary fees to Deposit Account No. 19-4293. Should the Examiner deem that any further amendments would be desirable in placing this application in even better condition for issue, he is invited to telephone applicants' undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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